

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2089

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BERLIN 5265

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CGEN, GE

SUBJECT: JEWISH CEMETERY IN BERLIN

REF: BERLIN 5229

1. DR. PETER KIRCHNER, CHAIRMAN OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY (JUEDISCHE GEMEINDE) OF EAST BERLIN, ASSURED EMBOFFS DURING CONVERSATION FEBRUARY 17 THAT HIS ORGANIZATION INTENDS TO MAINTAIN THE ADASSA ISRAEL CEMETERY OF THE ISRAELITE SYNAGOGUE COMMUNITY AT WEISSENSEE-WITTLICHERSTRASSE. HE STATED THAT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY HELD TITLE TO TH CEMETERY GROUNDS AND THE VACANT LOT ADJACENT TO IT( DESCRIBED REFTEL) AND SAID HIS ORGANIZATION HAD NO INTENTION OF SELLING EITHER AND WAS UNDER NO PRESSURE TO DO SO. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT OF THE THREE EAST BERLIN JEWISH CEMETERIES, ONLY THE LARGE CEMETERY ON HERBERT BAUM STRASSE WAS STILL BEING USED, AND THUS STATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF 150,000 MARKS PER YEAR FOR CEMETERY MAINTENANCE SECURD IN 1975 HAS BEEN EARMARKED FOR THAT CEMETERY ALONE.

2. DR. KIRCHNER ADMITED THAT MAINTENANCE AT ADASSA ISRAEL WAS PROBLEM DUE TO LACK OF FUNDS AND WORKERS. ELEMENTAL CARETAKING FUNCTIONS WERE PERFORMED BY THE STAFF OF THE NEIGHBORING EVANGELICAL CEMETERY BUT WERE NOT EXTENSIVE ENOUGH TO CURB UNDERGROWTH AND TOMBSTONE

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EROSION. ACCORDING TO KIRCHNER, THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

HAD ERRECTED A STORM FENCE AROUND TH CEMETERY SEVERAL YEARS AGO BUT VANDALS HAD MAD OFF WITH LARGE SECTION OF IT IN EARLY 1975. HE SAID HE HAD ORGANIZED ETAOOBER YOUTH BRIGADE, INCLUDING TEN STUDENTS FROM HOLLAND, TO WORK ON THE CEMETERY IN SUMMER 1975 AND PLANNED TO CONTINUE THE PROGRAM ON A YEARLY BASIS AS A MEANS OF KEEPING THE CEMETERY IN BASIC REPAIR.

3. WE WILL FOLLOW UP WITH A DETAILED AIRGRAM ON OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH DR. KIRCHNER.

4. PLEASE INFORM AMBASSADOR COOPER.GROVE

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## Message Attributes

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